

**Philippine Statement**  
**Ministerial Meeting on Governance**  
**and International Commodity Markets**

06 October 2014

Rome, Italy

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies,  
The FAO Director General,  
Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Philippines greatly appreciates FAO's efforts in maintaining this annual forum, wherein high-level officials could exchange views and ideas on critical issues confronting the food and agricultural sector. This year's theme on "governance and international commodity markets" is timely in light of the need for pro-active responses to challenges faced by members to cope with the changing commodity markets, especially in the developing world.

We believe that the global policy and development agenda for commodities should still place priority to the twin goals of achieving food security and nutrition, and addressing climate change.

Food security and raising incomes are the overarching goals of the agriculture sector under the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011-2016. Indeed, the three price spikes in the last five years prompted countries and intergovernmental organizations to rethink development policies and strategies, particularly in the agricultural sector. In principle, failure in the world market can be addressed by international policy coordination, but without effective coordination, most countries strive for self-sufficiency. In this context, the Philippine Department of Agriculture has embarked on a six-year food and staples sufficiency program since 2011, anchored on improving farm productivity and making the Filipino farmer globally competitive.

At the heart of this program are the farmers, especially the family farmers and smallholder producers and fisher-folk. These sectors must be heard and should figure prominently in national and international governance, debates and decision-making processes. Thus, the celebration of the 2014 "International Year of Family Farming" is a useful opportunity to raise awareness and promote the welfare and interests of these sectors. Their sustained participation is critical in achieving food security and nutrition, a goal that should be pursued in the Post-2015 Agenda.

Among the farmer-centered innovations that have been initiated under the program are the following:

1. Front-loading of investment in public goods, including irrigation, farm-to-market roads and other rural infrastructure;
2. Multi-agency approach to production credit, loan guarantees, and crop insurance;
3. Farm mechanization and provision of post-harvest facilities that would reduce post-harvest losses;
4. Demand management, wherein consumers are encouraged to avoid food wastage, and other staples are popularized; and
5. Transparent and accountable agriculture governance, characterized by direct communication with farmers in the field, as well as local governments and civil society organizations, and the mandatory use of maps to show location of roads and irrigated areas.

With more than 20 typhoons visiting annually, the Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. It is, therefore, imperative that the country develops its preparedness and resilience to climate change, and adaptation measures are given emphasis. For instance, we are supporting research on flood- and drought- tolerant varieties, improved farming systems technologies, and climate-adaptive infrastructure designs to secure our food for the future.

At the global level, efforts should be encouraged to enhance technology transfer and to scale up financial investments in addressing climate change threats that hinder sustainable agricultural productivity and greater access to commodity markets and trade.

We laud FAO and other institutions in initiating programs and actions that would advance governance of international commodity markets, such as:

1. The creation of the Agricultural Marketing Information System (AMIS), which helps improve commodity information gathering, enhance transparency and promote policy coordination;
2. The review and strengthening of dedicated commodity mechanisms in the form of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) and intergovernmental commodity groups (IGGs); and
3. The piloting of inclusive *multi-stakeholder fora* involving all stakeholders in a particular commodity market, namely, the private sector, NGOs, government, producers, traders and consumers. Indeed, partnership of farmers and fisher-folk with other stakeholders will enable more effective involvement in commodity production and trade.

Thank you.